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THE METHODIST FEDERATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICE
(UNOFFICIAL)

An organization which rejects the method of the struggle for profit as the economic base for society; which seeks to replace it with social-economic planning in order to develop a society without class distinctions and privileges.

150 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY
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A REAL UNITED FRONT

The United Christian Council for Democracy, the first radical religious united front in this country, was formed at Columbus, Ohio, November 17-18, 1936. With this end in view, conversations between individuals in several denominations had been in process for about two years. A small preliminary conference held last May agreed that "the time had come to form an interdenominational fellowship to express the Christian message in relation to the social situation, and to promote Christian social action in ways that are forbidden to official bodies because of their relation to the existing institutions of society. It was agreed that the most effective form of organization would be a federation of unofficial denominational groups which are extending their influence and numbers in their own denominations at the same time that they are cooperating in the following ways:

(1) The issuing of statements and appeals to American Christians concerning both the general social crisis and particular incidents in it.

(2) The organization and support of concrete actions in local and national situations.

(3) The circulation of printed matter jointly prepared or approved."

The Columbus gathering (91 representatives of 9 denominations) confirmed this judgment and launched the UCCD to coordinate and stimulate the thinking and action of unofficial denominational groups. Those now at work are: the MFSS and the CLID (Church League for Industrial Democracy). The conference of Southern Churchmen is an interdenominational group. Embryonic groups which are now being formally organized exist in the Congregational, Presbyterian, Disciples, Evangelical and Reformed denominations. Others are being projected among the Baptist, Unitarian, and Community Churches.

A National Committee and an Executive Committee composed of representatives elected by each denominational group, directs the activities of the Council between the national conferences. The Executive Committee has made plans for the first national statement on a current religious issue of great importance, and for the formation of local units in several cities which can proceed to do likewise in the local situations. A subcommittee is considering the possibility of a joint factual bulletin and of a popular weekly sheet.

"The purpose of the United Christian Council for Democracy is to bring together for education and united action those in all Christian churches who are concerned with their failure to express the social imperatives inherent in the Christian religion.

"Our Christian faith in a God of love and righteousness, our acceptance of the prophetic command to do justice and love mercy, our obedience to Jesus' teachings concerning the values and possibilities of human life, leaves us with no alternative save to labor for a radically new society.

"Therefore, moved by the joint compulsion of the desperate needs of human society and the inescapable demands of the Christian faith and hope, we unite around the following basic principles:

1. We reject the profit-seeking economy and the capitalistic way of life with its private ownership of the things upon which the lives of all depend.
2. We seek to establish a social economy which, under social ownership and democratic control of the common means of life, will make possible the highest potential development of persons and of society.
3. We pledge our resolute efforts to accomplish this basic change in the organization of society by the democratic process.
4. We propose to support the necessary political and economic action to implement these aims.
5. In all this we rely upon the availability of spiritual resources adequate for the redemption of society."

AN ESTIMATE

One of our representatives, Rev. Edgar N. Jackson, of Thomaston, Conn., makes the following estimate of the conference: "Everyone seemed conscious of the importance of the meetings and of the facts that frontier work was here being done. Rev. Clifford L. Stanley (Episcopalian) made articulate the feeling that prevailed when he said that we were doing something historically new. We could find support in the teachings of Jesus and the Prophets, and in the history of the Church, but there was no precedent for an organization, united with the definite purpose of attacking an economic and social system that was corrupting and laying waste human life. While there is historical inspiration there is no historical method. It is our work to forge the method as we face the problems that arise.

"The fact that these problems are close at hand and grave was indicated by the personal experiences of the men who were suffering for their beliefs and actions at the hands of an already evident reaction. The differences of opinion and belief among the men seemed insignificant in the face of the impelling vision and the common enemy and peril. Personally, I never felt so confident of the possibilities of the social ministry as I did in the upsurging determination of this group of men who approached their task with careful consideration, mature wisdom, real experience and a reserve of spiritual power."

FROM THE FIELD

From a minister, Mr. X—: "One of the men of the Official Board asked the District Superintendent, 'Is it true that the Methodist Church is back of the activities that Mr. X is interested in? Twice in the last twenty-four hours I have heard Mr. X say that the Methodist Church stands for the right of labor to organize and I should like to know if that is true.'

"The District Superintendent answered, most emphatically, 'No.' Then he hesitated a minute and added, 'Oh, there may have been general statements made at one time or another, but it was never intended that a minister should participate in direct action. The minister is happy who has wit enough to keep out of controversial matters. If he can't do that he has no business in the Christian church.'"

* * *

A small group of ministers in the North East Ohio Conference is working out plans for a Brotherhood group for a voluntary pooling of salaries and sharing or equalizing on a basis of relative need.

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From Pocatello, Idaho: On November 11, the *Christian Century* asked, "Can the American Legion keep Senator Borah from speaking on peace in a building of the University of Idaho on Armistice Day?" The question still remains—technically—unanswered. Emergency speakers were obtained, there were some 600 persons in attendance, the program was successfully carried through to the end. Determined Ministerial and Labor Unions had their way without benefit of Borah and in spite of the Legion and its friends. Our member, Gross Alexander, was the leader.

FROM OUR MAIL BAG

"This is written to extend my appreciation and admiration for the courageous fight which you and Bishop McConnell are waging against the Fascist threat to our civilization and to everything which true Americans hold dear. Your linking of the Catholic Church with the Fascist attack on democracy hits the nail on the head. . . . While I am not a member of any church, I would be very happy to join one where the true gospel of Christ is taught—the active creed of which you and Bishop McConnell are such distinguished exponents. . . . While we are in greatly reduced circumstances, I am glad to enclose two dollars which you may use in your fight for social justice.—A disabled veteran." (New York).

* * *

"I am a Catholic and all fair minded Catholics admire you for speaking the truth about Mussolini and Hitler. Mussolini has the Pope by the throat with one hand while he steals the money from his pockets that we Catholics give to our church to further the cause of Christianity and civilization; Mussolini is using this money to build his world murder machine."—G. F. (Long Island).

* * *

Commenting on the politico-religious conflict, one reader calls our attention to the following situation: "Although the United States had reduced the Italian debt by 50 per cent Mussolini refused, several years ago, to make any further payments on it. Because of the operation of the Johnson law, this act made it impossible for him to borrow any more money in this country. Now, because Italy is badly in need of funds with which to continue its conquest of Ethiopia, its political domination of the Balkan countries and the bloody destruction of Spain, Mussolini sends his representative, Fulvio Suvich, to America for the purpose of adjusting their debt to us, in order that they may be restored to good credit standing and thus be able to secure a large loan.

Mr. Suvich was given a banquet in New York which was attended by a thousand or more prominent bankers and industrialists. The chairman of the banquet is the president of a corporation which has used every means possible to fight collective bargaining by its workers—Myron Taylor of the U. S. Steel Corporation. In his address, Mr. Taylor heaped high praise upon the violent regime of oppression which Mussolini has brought to Italy, saying amongst other things that Mussolini had 'taught discipline to the Italian people.' The inference is plain. If Suvich is successful in floating a loan in this country, the U. S. Steel Co. will get a big

trouble largely to the failure of Catholics in Spain to do all they could to establish a right social system. It added that the victory of the Insurgents will not necessarily mean that enough right steps will be taken to cure Spain's poverty and injustice quickly enough to stave off further revolution.

What does German Catholic denunciation of the Nazi anti-religious mean in relation to the lineup between Fascist dictatorships and would-be democracies? The new president of Fordham University recently told us that the "shrewdest and wisest statesmanship" of the Italian Fascists was to make peace with the Vatican. Among other gains, the Vatican secured in that concordat the recognition of the Pope as an independent sovereign with assurance of the full exercise of his rights, and was granted supervision of religious instruction in the state schools. Since then there has been no word of rebuke for Mussolini, not even for the horrors of the Ethiopian campaign. Since our November statement that the lining up of the Vatican with Hitler and Mussolini in the anti-democratic campaign in Spain and elsewhere in the world "means settlement of the Catholic educational question in Germany as it was adjusted in Italy," Berlin has announced that Catholic youth may be separately organized for religious instruction.

Here the religious instruction question has been injected into the anti-communist campaign by the president of Notre Dame University. He has just told us that one of the reasons for the spread of Communism in this country is the godlessness of our public schools.

It is true that the Pope was denouncing Communism before Hitler and Mussolini, but that was for its atheism. Now other issues are raised. The latest press statement from the Vatican on its anti-Red campaign does not mention atheism. It speaks of "foreign policy," and it sets forth the campaign as a reaction to three recent events: 1. The admission of Russia to the League of Nations, 2. The increase in Communist deputies in the last French election, 3. The outbreak of the Spanish Revolution. These are political issues. And on them the Vatican has taken its stand. It is with Franco, Hitler, Mussolini and Japan just as certainly as though it had signed the agreement or entered the understandings between those forces. That these agreements mean a joint offensive against democracy and particularly "People's Front Democracy," because it leads to "Communism" is triumphantly proclaimed in the Nazi press.

It is the business of the Jesuit clique that now dominates the Vatican to cover their political objectives with religious slogans so that the Archbishop of Westminster can say "When Fascism goes down God's cause goes down"; and General O'Duffy can take his Blue Shirts from Ireland to Spain on a "crusade for Catholic Faith."

When our Catholic critics say it is false for us to assert that simple Spanish priests support the Madrid government, we can only marvel and cite some

CATHOLIC WITNESSES

Father Luis Sarasola. (Franciscan) "One week ago I landed in America. Immediately I find that my own Catholic people are being lied to. They do not know what is going on in my country."

From Speech. (Replying to the Jesuit Father James Castiello): "I must tell Father Castiello that I am as much of a Catholic priest and as religious as he may be. . . . The fact is that the immense majority of the people of Spain, the best Catholics of Spain, the Basques, all are with the legal government, supporting it with indomitable courage." (The answer of the Vatican authorities was to declare Father Sarasola "apostate," on purely technical grounds, without a hearing. Ironically, Father Sarasola's superior has since been driven out of his diocese by Franco.)

Jose Bergamin, young Spanish Catholic writer: "The rebels are not the Spanish people. . . . One can already say today that the people have become a united whole in the body of a new social order."

Father Garcia Morales. Radio address from Madrid to the Pope on the eve of his address to Spanish refugees in Rome: "As a loyal and obedient son of the Church, in whose faith I shall live and die, I wish to open my heart to you. . . . You cannot know how Catholicism in Spain has been discredited by priests and monks, who, instead of carrying the Christian message to the people, have arrayed themselves on the side of the rich. . . . It took the Spanish people eight centuries of struggle to reconquer their country and free it from the power of the Moors. Now we see bishops and priests together with the rebel generals bringing in thousands of armed Moors from Africa to subjugate the Spanish people. They put on their sacred medals and rosaries over the military uniform and give their blessing to the followers of Mohammed who come to destroy us. . . . Kneeling and avowing my Catholic faith, I express the hope that your Holiness may tomorrow awaken the conscience of the rebels . . . may influence them to lay down their weapons which they are wielding against the people."

Abbé Don Leocadio Lobo. From Madrid radio address "To the Catholics of Spain and the World, to brothers in the faith and men of good will: I am a minister of God, Spanish and Catholic. I am in regular contact with the Vatican and with my bishop. Never have I received a reprimand, nor have I been called to order by the authority of the Church. . . . I salute you with words that the Church has placed in the mouth of Sovereign Pontiffs, 'Peace be unto you.' . . . I say to the Catholics of Spain, to the military who have directed their arms against the people, to the conservative classes who have built a wall and opened an abyss between themselves and the people: you are making a great error. . . . In the name of

THE VATICAN'S UNITED FRONT

Since our November number analyzed the Vatican's attempt to create a religious united front against Communism as a part of an an international offensive against democracy further developments have occurred.

Two additional statements have come from Vatican City. It is emphasized that the appeal is not only to Catholics but to all "people of good will." It is pointed out that the initiative in anti-communist propaganda is being taken by various branches of the Catholic Action. The Pro Deo League, which brings in Protestants, "does not have direct relation to the Holy See, but acts on its own initiative in defending Christianity against the snares of communism." But it is significant that the organization mentioned as carrying out the instructions of the Pope in this matter is "the Sacred Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastic Affairs." This is the department that deals with concordats and the Vatican's diplomatic relations. It is plain that in this "religious" campaign against communism the Vatican is acting politically.

OUR ANALYSIS CONFIRMED

The Christian Century (Nov. 25th): "Sensible Protestants will have nothing to do with the Pope's furious onslaught on Communism until the false issues that it presents are clarified. And when they are clarified, it will be the more certain that they can have nothing to do with it. The Roman Catholic fight against Communism, as it is developing, is a campaign: first, for the power and privileges of the Roman Catholic Church; second, for a fascist type of political and social structure; third, against freedom of opinion and speech; fourth, for an alliance of business with religion and the sanctification of the economic status quo."

(Dec. 9th). "American Protestants cannot join in a crusade against Communism in alliance with Spanish Fascism and under the banner of a Pope who, while rightly condenming communist cruelty, lends to fascist terrorism the sanction of silence and sympathy. . . . Let all good Americans—*Protestant, Catholic and Jewish*—stay out of the Vatican campaign. In the interest of humanity, for the defense of liberty, in the name of pure and undefiled religion, for a closer cooperation of American Protestants and Catholics in all good causes—STAY OUT!"

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The New Republic (Dec. 23rd). An open letter to the Pope by Bruce Bliven, the editor: "For the first time in generations, the church is now caught up in a political alliance of profound significance and unpredictable, but enormously important consequences. Partially this situation is accidental, but in part, it is the result of what seems a succession of blunders in judgment by your advisors at Vatican City. . . . The first of these blunders was the agreement in 1929 with the Mussolini government. . . . The second blunder it seems to me has been the official participation of the church in the Spanish rebellion. . . . A third mistake, if I read the meaning of events correctly, has been the recent understanding with the Hitler government in Germany. . . . Among the most serious of the blunders, in my judgment, is the worldwide crusade against Communism. . . . The essential division in the world today is between the fascist dictatorships and the democracies . . . your church . . . has ranged itself on the wrong side. . . . It supports policies that can only be made to work by the enslavement of whole populations, and by the destruction of freedom of every type. . . . If I am right, this is the most tragic blunder in the history of your church."

CATHOLIC OBJECTIONS

Various comments by Catholic editors have come to our attention. They variously charge us with wild imaginings, ludicrous arrogance, vicious nonsense, bigotry. They forget that we, like others who have declined the invitation of the Vatican, have always opposed and will always oppose the Ku Klux section of Protestantism, that we have always preached and practised cooperation with Catholics in humanitarian measures and in the defense and extension of democracy.

We warn the Catholic authorities that their anti-communist crusade will stir up the violent and irresponsible elements in their communion. Already in Montreal Catholic students prevented a delegation from the Spanish government from speaking, with threats of disorder. (*Christian Century*, Dec. 9th). A few weeks previous, after a Catholic anti-communist meeting, bands of youth roamed the streets looking for Communists and some of them had to be arrested. (N. Y. *Times*).

When our Catholic critics speak seriously they deny that the Vatican is lined up with the Fascists to destroy democracy. They point out that the Vatican was denouncing Communism long before Hitler and Mussolini were doing so; that Cardinal Bertram, Dean of the German Catholic Episcopate, recently attacked the Nazi government for its attempt to sever Catholic children from the religious instruction of the church; that the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, representing a number of the American bishops, at its annual meeting November 26th issued a statement saying that the Church is not allied with despotism, denouncing dictatorships and every communistic and totalitarian state.

SO, WHAT?

These things are true. But what do they prove? The statement of the American Bishops does not change the policy of the Vatican one iota. It only confirms our previous judgment that American Catholics would not follow unitedly or wholeheartedly this latest political venture of the Vatican. *The Yardstick*, National Catholic Welfare Feature Service, recently ascribes Spain's

order for steel with which Italy can make munitions. On November 23rd a news dispatch from Rome came over the radio to the effect that Suvich's efforts were working out very successfully and complete adjustment of the debt situation would probably be announced very soon.

If these reports prove to be true, every American will have to hang his head in shame. Mussolini has already boasted of his warlike spirit; he has called the League of Nations a putretying corpse. Not being content to publicly ridicule democratic governments, he has worked assiduously to destroy them all over Europe, even going so far with his bloody ambitions as to instigate a revolution which is proving to be the most inhuman in history. It is inconceivable to me that our Government should make it possible for him to make use of our resources to carry out his campaign of destruction. It must not be, and I urge that your organization do everything in its power to acquaint the American people with the facts, so that they may complain so vigorously to the President and to the State Department, that they will not dare to negotiate any such arrangement."—E. J. B. (New York)

* * *

A reaction from an Ohio Conference: "Whereas the North East Ohio Methodist Episcopal Conference meeting in our city the past week has greatly centered its deliberations upon the social and economic questions of the day and

"Whereas the newspapers in reporting the proceedings of that body have brought to the attention of the general public the deplorable conditions that follow as a result of a low and inadequate wage for the workers, and

"Whereas the Rev. Bishop Francis J. McConnell and the Rev. Charles C. Webber have courageously addressed the Northeast Ohio Methodist Conference championing an adequate and just wage for the workers, with the intent thereby to promote a higher standard of living for those who labor and

"Whereas the message carried to the members of the North East Methodist Conference by these gentlemen is so in consonance with the aims, interests and purposes of the International Typographical Union, now therefore be it

"Resolved that Akron Typographical Union No. 182 take cognizance of the splendid, courageous action of the Rev. Bishop Francis J. McConnell and the Rev. Charles C. Webber in presenting to the North East Methodist Conference the just, equitable and Christian principle of a living wage as a means of helping the welfare of the entire commonwealth, by commending them for their interest in the labor movement."

LETTERS TO EDITORS

Members of the Federation are requested to follow carefully newspapers and magazines to which they subscribe and to note how these publications treat the international issue raised by the Spanish situation. To what extent do the publications you read give fair representation to the democratic side of this issue? To what extent do they present only the anti-democratic side as represented by the official policy of the Vatican? If the editors of the publications you read are presenting the democratic side fairly, write them and tell them so. If they are not presenting the democratic side fairly but are placing most of their emphasis on the anti-democratic side, write to the editors and ask for a fair presentation.

Most American publications are not fair in news and editorial presentation of this important issue. One reason for that lies in the fact that the forces lined up against democracy are well organized. Those who are on the side of democracy, and this number includes millions of Catholics, do not or cannot take advantage of the closely knit Vatican organization. For this reason our members and their friends should study newspapers and magazines and should write personal letters to the editors. In cases in which these publications are not fair to the democratic side of this issue, ask the editors why. Give them sufficient facts revealed in our November Bulletin on Spain and in this supplement to indicate that the issue in Spain, Europe, and the world is democracy vs. anti-democracy.

URGENT!

The urgency of the above request may be seen from the fact that the *New York Times* refused to print or mention our release on a Religious United Front, giving as the reason that Methodist laymen had said from time to time that we had no right to use the word "Methodist." The Spanish correspondent of one of our leading newspapers speaking in New York to a small group recently said that the American press has been hog-tied by the church.

A further word on the Preaching Mission: The preachers on the "team," for the most part, stayed carefully away from the zones of controversial matters, or if they did venture forth, as in the case of the social interpretation of the gospel, they soon gravitated back to the unctuous evangelicalism of the inner life. So that the social gospel was practically canceled out by the plausible "both-and" which the speakers, following Dr. Hough's explicit example, seemed to regard as the only alternative to "either-or." —*Christian Century.*

the Spanish people I insist that mercenaries, men of another race in the pay of the rebels shall not be sent against the Spanish people who fight on unequal terms."

PROTESTANT TESTIMONY

Dr. Juan Orts Gonzalez. (Well known in Protestant circles in the United States as missionary leader and editor of Spanish publications of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. For the past three years he has been the representative in Spain of The Friends of Spain.) "It is a conservative estimate to affirm that today about half of the Roman Catholic Church . . . and some of the most loyal, cultured and devout Catholics at that . . . is against Franco. . . . I claim that no priest was murdered *because he was a Catholic*, nor any church burned *because it was a Catholic Church.* Other motives inspired such incidents. On the dead bodies of two rebel officers were found documents instructing them upon entering a town to see the priest for the list of persons to be imprisoned or executed. Many Protestant leaders were on the lists. (Some of these lists have been published by a British missionary.) . . . Franco and his associates have been presented before the American people as defenders of religion when in reality they have already killed at least ten Evangelical pastors . . . probably more . . . in three instances with their wives, and in one instance with the children. What is more unbelievable to Roman Catholics, they have killed more than twenty Catholic priests, imprisoned the Catholic bishop of the Basque provinces and not a few friars and nuns. The reason why they did so was that the Basque provinces sided with the legally constituted government."

The press release of the Catalonian Government, December 1st, gives names and places in reporting the killing of Protestant clergymen, a school teacher, wives and children, in the region now under Fascist control. The Protest Press Bureau at Geneva issued a statement that several Protestant pastors had been shot by the Rebels, and that *Union*, the organ of "clerical Fascist bands had demanded the heads of all Protestants." It adds "The Rebel commander in the South seems to have opposed such intolerance." A dispatch from Bilbao, Spain, December 18th, says, "Spanish Fascists have just shot 30 Basque Catholic priests for having remained loyal to the legal government of Spain."

THE ISSUE

The testimony above cited makes it clear that the issue the Vatican has raised is not one of Christianity against Communism. Nor in refusing its invitation are we raising an issue of Protestants against Catholics. The Vatican has lined up with the Fascist powers in their assault upon the democratic principle of the right of the people to govern themselves in ways of their own choosing. This political policy the progressive elements in Protestantism are opposing and will oppose. They stand together for the American policy of separation of church and state in their international as well as their national politics. They are hoping that the progressive forces in American Catholicism will, in their own way, also stand for this basic principle.

OUR SITUATION

We need $2,500 more in pledges and contributions to meet our minimum $8,500 budget. We sent out a letter just before Christmas to all our members who have contributed in the past from $1 to $5 inclusive. This appeal up to date has raised only $160.75.

It is imperative that both our members who give from $1 to $5 inclusive and our members who give $6 and up must do one of two things, or both: 1st, Double their contribution; 2nd, Get another membership on the same basis as their own. Can you help?

If we can get this $2,500 subscribed in the next two months we can pull through. If not . . .

* * *

Charles Webber leaves January 2nd on a four months field trip, during which he will carry on a program of Social Evangelism—Social Education—Social Action between New York and the Pacific coast.

He has just returned from the Philadelphia Conference area. There he preached in three of our Methodist churches and addressed a business men's banquet arranged by the Conference Social Service Commission. He also spoke before the Conference Social Service Commission, the Philadelphia Union Preachers' Meeting, the Coatesville, Pa., Ministerium, the Lehighton, Pa., Community Young People's Forum, a Philadelphia young people's conference, a Y.W.C.A. conference and a class at the Temple University School of Theology.

In addition he, together with Federation members of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, investigated the Stetson Hat Company and the Berkshire Knitting Mills strikes.

At Reading, Pa., both he and Rev. Theodore Miner spoke at a meeting of the Berkshire Mills strikers and assured them that the M. E. Church stands for the right of both employees and employers alike to organize and bargain collectively.

Two of the strike leaders, young men who have been active in the church for years, one a Bulletin member of the M.F.S.S., related how, after they had become convinced of the power of non-violence, they had been able to persuade themselves and 55 of the strike pickets to lie down in front of one of the mill gates in an endeaver to peacefully oppose the entrance of the strike-breakers. They described how they continued to do this in spite of the fact that the police threw tear gas bombs and used sickening gas. And they told how, even though the police arrested them and put them in jail, other strikers continued the Gandhi method day after day until the local jail was filled and jails in nearby cities had to be utilized.

The supplement is contributed by one of our active workers. For assistance in preparation of this BULLETIN we are indebted to Helen Grace Murray Alberta Childs, and Gertrude Sauer.